

Updated traditions characterize the '80s wedding

Plan wedding in keeping with your personal taste and lifestyle

A wedding is a celebration universal yet diversified in style and presentation. No other event creates as much joy and excitement — not only for the bride and groom but for everyone involved.

What makes it even more exciting today are the different options that are available to couples. Marriage today has no one formula. Whether you opt for getting married when you are older or younger, decide to have a dual-career marriage or a more traditional union, the one thing most brides and grooms agree on is that you can make your marriage what you want it to be.

This idea also carries over to the actual planning of the wedding. Most couples today share the responsibility of planning a wedding.

Getting involved in the planning of the ceremony as well as the celebration afterwards is the best way to make your wedding a personal statement of whom you are.

Choosing the vows with which you feel comfortable, or writing a good deal of the ceremony yourselves, can help make you feel that your wedding is a reflection of whom you are as a couple.

Your reception, too, should be planned according to what you as a couple want, and enjoy.

There are many types of receptions from which today's bride and groom can choose. A traditional sit-down dinner is as popular as ever. Many couples like the orderliness, organized feeling this type of seating arrangement conveys. Large as well as small groups can accommodate themselves to this type of arrangement.

A buffet dinner is also very popular. More casual in feeling, this type of reception allows people to move freely amongst the other guests.

A buffet dinner also allows the bride and groom more freedom when choosing a menu. With this type of dinner, an appealing variety of dishes can be served. Also, in many cases, a buffet dinner is less expensive than the traditional sit-down reception.

Another alternative that is becoming increasingly popular is a cocktail hour reception. Similar to a buffet reception, a cocktail reception usually includes champagne with hot and cold hors d'oeuvre

Pretty as a picture



Making the most of your time...

Efficiency and organization are the keys

Can you organize a traditional wedding for this summer if you've just become engaged? Most bridal guides advise allowing six months to a year to attend to the many details.

But a new book from *Bride's magazine*, entitled *Streamlined Strategies for a Beautiful Wedding* (Frigate Books), offers help to those who want or need to plan a celebration in a hurry.

This can speed up your planning timetable without sacrificing your dream of a lovely wedding, say the authors. The key to efficiency and organization:

- **Network** to whittle down options. You won't be able to visit every wedding vendor in your area. Instead, ask friends and business associates for specific recommendations. Then, ask the florist or

photographers they've put you in contact with for their referrals.

Attend a bridal show, if possible, to take advantage of the multiple ideas and services gathered in one place.

- **Manage your time.** Assign a priority to each wedding task. Then, list of things to do and update them each day. Take each step of the way, writing down estimates, impressions, names. If you rely on memory alone, you'll end up retracing your steps and forgetting important details.

- **Prepare notes** when appropriate. Pen them up now to your appointment, but they're for their gift on your honeymoon.

- **Delegate, delegate, delegate.** Willing friends and family members can be lifesavers. Does your mother love to shop? She might score scores for bridesmaid's gifts. Your father could arrange for the invitation printing and order the liquor. An uncle could mow up the legal forms for changing your name on bank accounts, driver's license, stock certificates.

- **Set deadlines** to get things done. Otherwise, Parkinson's Law applies: "Work expands to fill the time available for its completion."
- **Choose a wedding gown** in a simple style; the ordering time may be shorter.

- **Look at discontinued sample dresses** on sale, or order a bridesmaid's dress — in white.
- **Have a wedding consultant** to relieve you of time-consuming tasks.
- **Use a wedding gift registry** to organize your gift preferences.
- **If possible, pay for express service.** Everything from printing to portrait finishing can be hurried — for a price.
- **Shop by mail** — possibilities include attendants' gifts, bridal shoes, toasting glasses, invitations, wedding accessories.
- **Have a simple instrument**, such as a harp, to play at both the ceremony and reception.
- **Plan a weekend away** right after the wedding; take an all-out honeymoon trip.

Bridal survey reveals that friendship, traditions are important in marriage

More of changing sex roles and more equal marital partnerships, today's bride is placing a high priority on friendship as the basis for marriage.

A survey of 350 brides-to-be, conducted by Lenox China and Crystal, reveals their feelings and opinions regarding relationships and traditions and offers some insights into the future plans of newlyweds.

Friendship as a basis for marriage

The survey indicates that today's bride is "best friends" with her spouse. About 70 percent of the women met their husbands-to-be at work, school or through mutual friends. In contrast, only seven percent polled met their fiancés at restaurants or parties.

Approximately 96 percent of the brides consider their fiancé their best friend and

share similar views on issues. By comparison, few brides say opposites attract.

About 70 percent of the brides place the highest regard on the inner qualities of their future husband. Important characteristics include his sense of humor, patience and intelligence. Less important are physical appearance, sex appeal and financial status.

Future plans of newlyweds

According to the survey findings, the number of two-career families with both parents working full-time or the mother working part-time will continue to be a strong trend. Many brides-to-be plan to combine child-rearing with careers.

Almost 99 percent of the brides-to-be plan to work away from home after marriage. Family life is also important to today's bride, as 88 percent of the women

plan to have children.

Most brides-to-be are interested in entertaining in their homes after marriage and plan to do so often. Over 50 percent of the brides expect that they will hold small casual dinner parties. Others expressed an interest in hosting formal dinners, theme, holiday and cocktail parties.

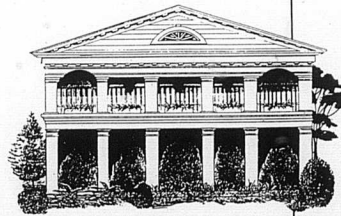
In accordance with their desire to entertain, 81 percent of future brides say they will need a formal set of crystal and china, and plan to select these items at the bridal registry. Over three-quarters of the brides also plan to register for casual china.

Lenox China and Lenox Crystal, the number one choice of registering brides in the United States, conducted this survey because of its strong commitment to newlyweds across the country.

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